

means, within the network management request scheduler, for scheduling the network management request in the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.

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28. (Amended) A computer program product for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable code thereon, including program code which:

assigns a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request; and

schedules the network management request in the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.

#### REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are pending in the application. Claims 1-28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kimura (J.P. Patent No. 10-040044). In response, Claims 1-28 have been amended to clarify the Applicants' claimed invention.

The Applicants claim a method for prioritizing network management requests sent by a management station to a managed element. A priority value is assigned to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request. The network management request is scheduled by the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value. (See Applicants' Specification, Fig. 1, elements 102, 104 and Page 8, line 17 - Page 9, line 15.)

The priority value may be assigned to the network management request by the managed element. The managed element assigns the priority value by adding a priority value to an authentication group, including user identification values in an authentication table or by adding a priority value to a source identification in a source identification table. The network management request is scheduled by the managed element by extracting the user or source identification values from the network management request and using the extracted identification to index the corresponding table.

Alternatively, the priority value may be assigned by the management station. The management station assigns a priority value to each network management request before sending the network management request to the managed element. The priority value included in the request is extracted by the network management element and the managed element schedules the network management request dependent on the extracted priority value.

The cited prior art Kimura is directed to a printer managing system. The system includes a priority level managing server for scheduling jobs to a printer based on assigned priority levels. The priority level managing server assigns a priority level to a job based on the sender of the job. The sender of the job may be a user or a host computer. The priority level managing server schedules the jobs based on the assigned priority level. (See Kimura Page 1, section [0007], lines 3-8; Page 2, section [0015]; Page 3, section [0020] and Drawing 1, elements 10 and 20.)

In contrast, the Applicants' claimed invention assigns a priority value "dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request" as claimed by the Applicants in base Claims 1, 18, 27 and 28. Kimura does not teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed "requester identifier included in the request" for assigning a priority value. Kimura merely describes assigning priority based on the sender of the job. (See Kimura, Page 2, section [0010] and Page 3, section [0020].)

The printer management system described by Kimura does not teach or suggest "scheduling the network management request by the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value" as claimed by the Applicants in base Claims 1, 18, 27 and 28. In the printer management system described by Kimura, the scheduling of jobs is performed by a priority level managing server not by the printer. The printer merely executes jobs in the order in which they are received from the priority level managing server. (See Kimura Page 2, section [0010].)

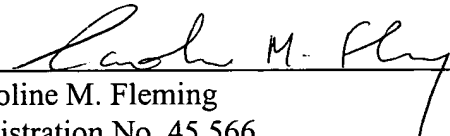
The above quoted claim language is in base Claims 1, 18, 27 and 28. Claims 2-17 are dependent on Claim 1, Claims 19-26 are dependent on Claim 18 and thus include this limitation over the prior art.

Thus, Kimura does not teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed method for prioritizing a network management request. Accordingly, the present invention as now claimed is not believed to be anticipated or made obvious by the cited art or any of the prior art. In view of the foregoing, removal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and acceptance of Claims 1-28 are respectively requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims (Claims 1-28) are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (978) 341-0036.

Respectfully submitted,  
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MARKED UP VERSION OF AMENDMENTSClaim Amendments Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(1)(ii)

1. (Amended) A method for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, comprising the steps of:
  - assigning a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request; and
  - scheduling the network management request, by the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.
2. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the step of assigning is performed by the managed element.
3. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 2 wherein the step of assigning further comprises the step of:
  - adding a priority value to an authentication group comprising user identifications, in an authentication table.
4. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 2 wherein the step of assigning further comprises the step of:
  - adding a priority value to a source identification in a source identification table.
5. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the steps of:
  - extracting a user identification from the received network management request; and
  - determining the priority value by using the extracted user identification to index the authentication table.

6. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 5 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:
  - selecting the order of execution of the network management request dependent on the determined priority value.
7. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
  - preempting the currently executing task if the determined value for the management request is higher than the currently executing task.
8. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
  - adding the management request to the end of a request queue if the determined priority is lower than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.
9. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 6 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
  - adding the management request to the front of a request queue if the determined priority is higher than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.
10. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:
  - extracting the source identification from the network management request; and
  - determining the priority value by using the extracted source identification to index the source identification table.
11. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 10 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:
  - selecting the order of execution of the network management request dependent on the determined priority value.

12. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 11 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
  - preempting a currently executing task if the determined value for the management request is higher than the currently executing task
13. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 11 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
  - adding the management request to the bottom of a request queue if the determined priority is lower than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.
14. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 11 wherein the step of selecting further comprises the step of:
  - adding the management request to the top of a request queue if the determined priority is higher than the priority of the tasks in the request queue.
15. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the step of assigning is performed by the management station.
16. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 15 wherein the step of assigning further comprises the step of:
  - storing a priority value in the network management request before sending the network management request to the managed element.
17. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the step of scheduling further comprises the step of:
  - extracting the priority value from the network management request; and
  - scheduling the network management request dependent on the extracted priority value.
18. (Amended) An apparatus for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, comprising:

a priority assignment routine which assigns a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request; and

a network management request routine which schedules the network management request in the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.

19. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 18 wherein the assignment routine is located in the managed element.
20. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the priority assignment routine further comprises:
  - a priority value assignment routine which adds a priority value to an authentication group comprising user identifications, in an authentication table.
21. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 20 wherein the network management routine further comprises:
  - a user identification extraction routine which extracts a user identification from the network management request; and
  - a priority value extraction routine which determines the priority value by using the extracted user identification to index the authentication table.
22. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the priority value assignment routine further comprises:
  - a priority value assignment routine which adds a priority value to a source identification in a source identification table.
23. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 22 wherein the network management routine further comprises:
  - a source identification extraction routine which extracts the source identification from the network management request; and

a priority value determination routine which determines the priority value using the extracted source identification to index the source identification table.

24. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 18 wherein the assignment routine is located in management station.
25. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 22 wherein the assignment routine further comprises:
  - a priority value assignment routine which stores a priority value in the network management request before sending the network management request to the managed element.
26. (Amended) [An] The apparatus as claimed in Claim 25 wherein network management routine further comprises:
  - a priority extraction routine which extracts the priority value from the network management request; and
  - a request scheduling routine which schedules the network management request dependent on the extracted priority value.
27. (Amended) An apparatus for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, comprising:
  - a priority assignment routine;
  - a network management request scheduler;
  - means, within the priority assignment routine, for assigning a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the network management request; and
  - means, within the network management request scheduler, for scheduling the network management request in the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.



28. (Amended) A computer program product for prioritizing a network management request sent by a management station to a managed element, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable code thereon, including program code which:

assigns a priority value to the network management request dependent upon a requester identifier included in the request; and

schedules the network management request in the managed element dependent on the assigned priority value.